

THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

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dom. Let everyone seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seek Christ as Lord and Master."

We hear a lot of talk about Americanism. If you want to know what it really is, read the Declaration of Independence. There is the essence of Americanism; and the essence of the Declaration is a Christian assumption:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are . . . endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

There were no arguments or committee meetings or panel discussions about it: Simply, we proclaim these things as truth because we know them to be truth! Here, in paraphrase, are the truths which they proclaimed;

Government derives its just power from us, the governed. We want it clearly understood, moreover, that the grant of power which we make to government is very limited. Even though we must delegate to government enough power to protect all of us from one another, and from possible foreign enemies, we have certain rights which we are not willing to surrender or modify for any purpose whatever. We call these rights unalienable because God, our Creator, endowed us with them: we consider them sacred. Each one of us as an individual, whether rich or poor, weak or strong, has certain rights that God has given him and that no power on earth can take away, neither government, nor an organized group, nor an overwhelming majority of the people themselves.

Among these sacred rights are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. Initially, we said Life, Liberty, and Property; but we changed Property to Pursuit of Happiness to enlarge the area of rights which we consider sacred.

After winning the independence they had declared, and after writing a Constitution to make the necessary grant of limited power to a central government, the Founding Fathers worried about that matter of their sacred and unalienable rights. In the first section of their Constitution, where they granted power to the new government, they started off by saying, "The powers herein granted."

They meant that the government should have no powers except those specifically listed in the Constitution. But was that sufficiently clear and emphatic? Perhaps not. The Founding Fathers decided to make certainty doubly certain. They wrote a Bill of Rights (the first ten amendments to their Constitution), not asking the government for any rights, but specifically listing certain God-given rights and telling government that it must not, could not, tamper with them.

That is the meaning of the American Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Congress shall make no law abridging these specific, sacred rights of ours.

Where did such notions of government come from? They were sent into the world at Bethlehem, on a night that was silent and holy, on the first day of the first year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Christian concept of equality (also written into the Declaration of Independence: All men are created equal) is not tainted with materialism. Jesus rather impatiently said that the poor are always with us. His concept of equality had nothing to do with man's physical attributes and possessions, or with the general distribution of worldly goods. The teachings of Jesus did not imply mass organization and standardization of people, or world-wide uniformity, or a universal leveling of mankind. They implied the opposite. Jesus taught that the creatures of God are equal before God, regardless of their status on earth.

The Christian concept of equality is spiritual. It has nothing to do with my income or my health or my environment. It simply gives me—a little, imperfect man, born in sin—an individual, personal relationship with God: a relationship equal to that of any other man on earth. In short, Christianity exalts individualism, stressing the importance and the exclusive dependence on God and self of the human individual.

These Christian ideas of the sacredness and infinite worth of the human personality had to lie germinating in the minds of men for eighteen centuries—long enough to form fundamental thought pattern—before they found expression in a charter of government for a great nation: America.

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

The strength and culture of America, built on faith in Jesus Christ, will start degenerating when Americans no longer hold aloft the central tenet in Christian faith—namely, that the human individual (not the masses or society, but the individual) is a divinely important being, because God sent His only begotten Son into the world to make a blood atonement for the sins of individuals.

The strength and culture of communism-socialism-fascism, built on faith in the almighty state, or government, would die if heavily infiltrated with Christian individualism, because the central tenet of communist-socialist-fascist faith is that the individual is nothing; the State (or society, or the masses, or government) is everything.

Thus, the current conflict between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States is not merely a rivalry between two nations. It is a clash of two opposite ideologies, of two irreconcilable faiths, one of which is doomed to destruction. Socialism can neither be appeased nor contained, because it is built on the notion that it must conquer all or die. All communist talk about wanting peaceful coexistence with the west is a lie intended to disarm and confuse. Communists not only do not want peaceful coexistence: they don't even think it possible.

They are probably right. Socialism could not survive, in an intellectual climate where Christian ideals prevail, because socialism is fundamentally atheistic: it is a belief in all-powerful government rather than in all-powerful God. America, on the other hand, could not survive if the Christian base of her institutions were destroyed, because the foundation of Americanism is Christian.

The great battle for freedom is primarily a battle for the minds and souls of men. It can be won only if free men are aflame with a faith greater than that of their enemies.

Could the horrible socialist concept of man as an unimportant unit in a soulless something called the masses, win converts among free men? Could materialistic faith in socialism ever have a stronger appeal to free men than Christian faith in the divine importance of individuals?

It has.

SOCIALIZING THE GOSPEL

We will find our most fertile field for infiltration of Marxism within the field of religion, because religious people are the most gullible and will accept almost anything if it is couched in religious terminology.

Lenin made this prediction to the students of revolution in Moscow after the bolsheviks had found it impossible to destroy the churches from without.

They could seize the church buildings and disperse the congregations and make men afraid to attend public service—and they did.

They could convert sanctuaries into soldier's barracks, and taverns, and dance halls—and they did. They could imprison, torture, and murder clergymen—and they did. But they could not force Christian faith out of the hearts and minds and souls of men.

Hence, Lenin ordered a change of tactics: infiltrate the churches so that their destruction could be performed gradually, from within, by church people themselves. Reinterpret the Scriptures in such a way as to remove the diety of Christ and convert Him into a socialist. Distort Biblical sermons on charity to prove that government should take over all property and divide it up to achieve economic equality for all.

In short, if you will strain all spiritual content out of Scripture, you can break religion's hold upon the people: God is changed from an all-powerful, all-knowing, and very personal heavenly Father—into some kind of vague, undefined universal force. Jesus is no longer a Diety—God Himself. Jesus becomes merely a great man, a teacher, a philosopher, a social reformer.

A church establishment built on such notions as these is not an insurmountable obstacle in the path of the socialist revolution. On the contrary, it can become a very useful instrument for promoting socialism.

You could fill a room full of reliable statistics to show that thousands of church people have supported hundreds of communist causes. But it wouldn't do any good.

No one would pay any attention to you except some top officials of great church organizations—like the National Council of Churches; and they would merely howl you down as a fool and trouble maker.

In a way, church officials are correct in belittling the importance of the communist fronts.

The important question is whether Christian preachers have rejected or corrupted the fundamental doctrines of their faith.

The fundamental doctrine of Christianity is that imperfect man can be saved only by the grace of Jesus Christ.

The fundamental doctrine of socialism is that all of man's sins—all evils on earth—result from man's physical environment. Consequently, government can create paradise by taking total control of the lives of all the people; all the evils on earth can be legislated away if government has enough power to create the right environment—enough power to regulate and control and redistribute until everyone has an equal share of everything!

It is at this point that preachers who regard themselves as Christian socialists begin to substitute government for God. It is at this point that the social gospel becomes socialism.

The social gospel originated in the belief that Christians must be known by their works. It's not enough for a man to believe in Jesus. He must also behave like a believer—must carry out Jesus' instructions to all believers: treat others as you would like them to treat you; love your neighbor as yourself; share your blessings with people less fortunate than yourself.

Hence, the typical old-fashioned social-gospel preacher was one who exhorted his congregation to lead better lives. But as the years rolled by and people kept on sinning, the newest crop of social gospel preachers seemed to lose faith in exhorting and praying. Many modern liberal clergymen turn to government and not to God, to correct evils in the society around them.

Many modern liberal ministers seem to have lost confidence in God. They react to problems around them by exerting pressure, in the name of Christian churches, for federal laws which will impose their notions of equality and morality on the entire nation. They do not believe in voluntary, individual Christian giving—except to their own churches. They believe in organized political pressures for legislation which will force other people to give.

Great numbers of modern clergymen apparently have come to regard their job as being, not ministers of the Gospel of Jesus, but formulators of public opinion on

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